

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y MRN (2361 VICE 2261)

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EALR, EC, ECIN, GR
SUBJECT: GREECE/EC: GREEK REACTION TO FRENCH HINT OF
DELAY IN NEGOTIATIONS

1. FOLLOWING A MARCH 10 REPORT IN "LE MONDE" ON AN ALLEGED
"NEW FRENCH DOCTRINE" WHICH IS CAUTIOUS ON THE TIMING OF
ENLARGEMENT OF THE EC, COORDINATION MINISTER PAPLIGOURAS ISSUED
A STRONG STATEMENT IN WHICH HE CLAIMED THAT "THE CASE OF GREECE
IS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT ... FROM THE CASES OF OTHER EUROPEAN
COUNTRIES WHICH WILL SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO JOIN THE
COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE".

2. ACCORDING TO THE "LE MONDE" REPORT, THE NEW FRENCH "DOCTRINE"
WAS RAISED INFORMALLY BY FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD WITH HIS
EC COLLEAGUES AT THE MARCH 8 EC COUNCIL MEETING IN BRUSSELS.
IT ESSENTIALLY CALLS FOR TREATING THE THREE NEW CANDIDATES
"IN THE SAME SPIRIT AND WITH IDENTICAL METHODS." THE "LE MONDE"
REPORT FURTHER STATES THAT GREECE HAS PROFITED FROM "THE HASTY,
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EVEN RASH, REACTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY -- PARTICULARLY FRANCE" BY
OPENING NEGOTIATIONS, BUT THE NEW FRENCH POLICY IMPLIES THAT THIS
SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT GREECE WILL ENTER EARLIER
THAN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL. INSTEAD OF FIXING SPECIFIC DATES FOR FULL
MEMBERSHIP, THE FRENCH VIEW IS NOW THAT APPLICANT COUNTRIES SHOULD
ONLY BE ADMITTED WHEN "CERTAIN OBJECTIVE CRITERIA, DEFINED BY THE
COMMUNITY, ARE ACHIEVED" -- IN OTHER WORDS, WHEN THEY WILL

HAVE ARRIVED AT THE LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT REQUIRED FOR THEM TO BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT EC REGULATIONS. "LE MONDE" OPINES THAT THIS MODIFICATION IN FRENCH POLICY WILL BE FELT BY ATHENS AS A "COLD SHOWER".

3. GREEK REACTION HAS THUS FAR BEEN REASONABLY CALM. PAPALIGOURAS' STATEMENT NOTED THE "POLITICAL WILL" FOR MEMBERSHIP ALREADY EXPRESSED BY GREECE AND THE COMMUNITY, AND STRESSED THAT THE FACT THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY AND HAVE REACHED A SUBSTANTIVE STAGE MEANS THAT "THE CASE OF GREECE CANNOT BE CONFUSED WITH PROCEDURES FOLLOWED FOR ANY OTHER COUNTRY." PAPALIGOURAS ADVISED THE GREEK PEOPLE NOT TO WORRY EVERY TIME AN ARTICLE APPEARS IN THE WORLD PRESS, AND REMINDED THEM THAT THE GOG KNEW THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE DIFFICULT, BUT WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE DIFFICULTIES WOULD BE OVERCOME.

4. THERE WAS SOME REACTIONS IN THE GREEK PRESS, PRO-GOVERNMENT PAPERS EXPRESSING BOTH OPTIMISM AND BITTERNESS, WHILE OPPOSITION PAPERS POINTED TO GOG CONCERNS. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, PASOL CHAIRMAN ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, DURING A MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, NOTED THAT THE REPORTED FRENCH POSITION WOULD CREATE PROBLEMS FOR GREECE, BUT THE PRIME MINISTER DID NOT SHARE PAPANDREOU'S CONCERN.

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